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### **State Environment Department Invites Public to Lower Rio Grande Watershed Pre-monitoring Meeting**

(Santa Fe, NM) — The New Mexico Environment Department is seeking public input and involvement on surface water quality planning for the Lower Rio Grande watershed in the south-central portion of the state.

The Department will hold two public meetings to inform stakeholders of watershed activities and programs, and to provide a forum for interested parties to ask questions, and provide comments and suggestions on watershed needs and priorities. The public meetings for the Lower Rio Grande watershed will be Wednesday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, at 103 Hernandez Hall (formerly Engineering Complex II) at New Mexico State University, southeast corner of Espina and Frenger in Las Cruces, NM. On Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, a meeting will be held in Socorro at the Socorro Public Library, 401 Park St. Both meetings will be held from 6:30-8:30 PM.

Representatives from the Environment Department will discuss the monitoring plan for the Lower Rio Grande watershed, pollution control measures, summer field demonstrations, and future Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) development.

A TMDL is a planning document that establishes specific goals for water quality conditions. It includes reduction estimates for pollutants currently exceeding state surface water quality standards and an implementation plan suggesting what actions might be carried out to restore or protect the health of the body of water. The process for developing a TMDL will also be described and discussed at the meeting.

Additional information can be found on the Environment Department's website at <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb>.

For more information, contact Stephanie Stringer, Outreach Coordinator for the SWQB, NMED at (505) 827-0418, or Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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